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DE RUEHIL #4595/01 0791417  
ZNY SSSSS ZZH  
O 201417Z MAR 06  
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2732  
INFO RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI 0155  
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE 8076  
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR 5879  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 ISLAMABAD 004595

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/10/2016  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [PK](#)  
SUBJECT: DRL FUNDING FOR 2007 PAKISTAN ELECTIONS

Classified By: Derived from DSCG 05-01, d

11. (C) Summary: Post has designed an electoral support strategy in order to promote free and fair elections national and provincial elections in 2007. In order to implement fully the various aspects of this strategy, we will require dedicated funding support from DRL to complement our USAID DG and PAS funding, which will support other aspects of the electoral support program. For funding to be effective, we will need to begin now to solicit specific election-related proposals with the intention of seeing implementation as early as June 2006. Post requests that DRL make funds available and solicit proposals for the following projects discussed in more detail in the following paragraphs:

International Election Observation including Parallel Vote Count  
Development of an Election Code of Conduct  
Voter Education Activities in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas  
Training of Police Forces on Election Security

End Summary

Election Observation: Estimated Cost \$10-20 million

12. (C) Opposition political parties and the general public understandably have a low-level of confidence in election processes in Pakistan. Fraud and rigging of elections, up to and including the 2005 local bodies contest, have occurred with great regularity in the nomination, campaign, voting, and counting phases. Post believes, therefore, that it will be imperative to ensure that international observation covers all of these phases in an effort to provide both international validation of the contest and increased confidence in the results. Given the persistent allegations of rigging during the counting process, a parallel vote count needs to be included as part of the observation. Post has discussed the need for international observation with other donors. While there is uniform agreement on the need for such a mission, there is, as yet, no readiness on the part of other local missions to commit to funding. As it will take significant time for any implementing partner to organize the observation and parallel vote count, we strongly recommend that DRL move immediately to conduct a limited solicitation by invitation (NDI, IRI, IFES, Carter Center, etc.) and award a grant to enable an international NGO to begin this process. We will look to DRL to determine the necessary funding level and to coordinate with other donor nations on their contributions to this process.

Election Code of Conduct: Estimated Cost \$500,000

13. (C) Developing an electoral code of conduct that is

agreeable to all parties will be essential during the 2007 election process. In the past, the code has been imposed on parties by the Election Commission with no consultation and had significant loopholes that have been routinely exploited by the ruling party. For this reason, post believes that international technical assistance will be necessary (1) to ensure that the code adequately prevents any behavior that could unduly prejudice the outcome of the election and (2) to facilitate negotiations among the parties and with the Election Commission. PAS is willing to use its Speaker's Program to fund travel and support of one or more international experts for this process. Additional support from DRL will allow for the participation of additional experts including from the region. Development of an Electoral Code of Conduct will need to take place in December 2006/January 2007 in order to meet the likely election timeframe of late 2007. Funding for this activity can occur from FY 07 funds, but the solicitation and award process will need to take place in October for this to occur.

Voter Education: Estimated Cost \$1 million

¶4. (C) Political transformation of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) is a high-priority USG objective. The 2007 National Assembly elections are a key opportunity to begin this transformation and to expand the franchise beyond the small number who traditionally vote from this region. Post believes that additional voter education/"get out the vote campaigns" particularly targeting women are an essential component of holding a credible election in this area in ¶2007. We look to DRL to finance such education through a grant to an international NGO through a limited selection process. NGOs would need to be strongly encouraged to utilize established local partners as a key component of their program given the difficulties of working in the FATA.

ISLAMABAD 00004595 002 OF 002

Training of Police: Estimated Cost \$250,000

¶5. (S/NF) In advance of the 2005 local bodies elections, post successfully engaged with the GOP to prevent the involvement of intelligence agencies in the electoral process. With this channel of manipulation closed, provincial and district governments turned to the local police to intimidate, harass, and manipulate candidates and voters. We believe that training of District Police Officers on the appropriate methodology for providing security during an election can help to inculcate a sense of professionalism within the force, thereby limiting abuses. In addition, given the violent nature of Pakistani polls, professional training may well help to increase security. Post already has an active police training program run through DOJ's ICITAP. We recommend for this reason that DRL transfer necessary funds to ICITAP to carry out this additional specialized training approximately two months in advance of the election date.

Comment

¶6. (C) Post appreciates DRL's consideration and prompt funding of these proposals. We believe that these discreet programs will play a crucial role in ensuring free and fair elections in Pakistan and will build on USAID and PAS work in complementary areas.

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